

As I See It: A Brief Memoir

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Some of you may be too young to know, or too old to remember, who I am; so, before we show you why we brought you here, you need to know what qualifies me to speak. My name is Alan Stang. I am the author of ten books, three of which the Society published via Western Islands. One of them was *It's Very Simple: The True Story of Civil Rights*, a best-seller Bob Welch asked me to write. Another was *The Highest Virtue*, a novel that won rave reviews in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register* and five stars--top rating--from the West Coast Review of Books. [Here's a letter about it, from Ned Dunn](#), a member of the Council of JBS.

I was one of Mike Wallace's original writers. I have been a network radio talk show host. I went head to head with Larry King in Los Angeles, and, according to Arbitron, had almost twice as many listeners. I wrote my first article for *American Opinion* in April, 1963. That magazine was of course the predecessor of *The New American*, and that article began my long association with the John Birch Society. For many years, my wife and I were Life Members. An article by me appeared in every issue of *American Opinion* for the last 15 years of its life, with a single exception--when Managing Editor Scott Stanley asked for a piece on the sex lives of the Kennedys. Editor Stanley apparently didn't fully realize what the sex lives of the Kennedys were. When he found out, he pulled the piece, but the information therein later showed up in other pieces in the magazine.

[Here is a fan letter](#) I received from Elizabeth Linington, the best-selling novelist who wrote as Dell Shannon, Lesley Egan, and so on, and who was a member of the Society. I wrote for *The Review of the News*, also a predecessor of *The New American*. For a while, the Society syndicated my daily, national, radio news commentary, which aired in hundreds of markets.

While I wrote all those articles and did the daily news commentary, I traveled regularly on speaking tours for the American Opinion Speakers Bureau, doing about three tours a year, on subjects ranging from education, to China to the treasonous surrender of our Panama Canal. Some of those trips were four, five, even six weeks long. Every summer, for many years, I spoke at the youth camps the Society conducts, either as the final, Friday-night speaker, or throughout the week. [Here is a camp newspaper story](#) about my arrival. There was also considerable travel for the magazines and to the Council meetings and dinners. To refresh your memory, I was the third penguin from the end in the back row. It is probably fair to say that I traveled nationwide for the Society on those speaking tours longer than anyone else--twenty years--which no doubt is the reason I have only five kids.

Because of all that travel, I was apparently one of the few outside Birchers some people in out of the way hamlets ever saw; some of them mistakenly believed I was an important Society official. They were surprised to learn I had never even been on the staff. In one amusing contretemps, KTRH, the 50,000 watt clear-channel monster in Houston, retained me to do election night commentary. When my wife and I arrived in town, Hal Kemp, then station manager, proudly showed us the promotion he had done. It included substantial display ads in both the [Houston Post and Chronicle](#)--the biggest

papers in the state--identifying me as "National Chairman" of the John Birch Society. Hal was so proud of his work, I didn't bother to explain; the damage was done. The papers were long since in the streets. Later, in his office, I told Bob Welch that, since I now was "National Chairman," I wanted higher fees. He smiled archly and replied, "Well, Alan, you're 'National Chairman.' You arrange it."

Headquarters of the JBS then were located in Belmont, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. Bob Welch had been a student at Harvard Law School--had left when he found it overrun with Felix Frankfurter's "Happy Hot Dogs," such as Alger Hiss--and had stayed to enter the candy business and marry Marian Probert. Bob insisted that my wife and I live in the Belmont area and office at headquarters. We wanted to live there only a little more than we wanted to live in Moscow, which is also a suburb of Boston. Indeed, Texas Congressman Ron Paul, M.D., my friend for many years, once asked me in exasperation, "Alan, can you explain why the John Birch Society--which is fighting Communism--is located in Boston, of all places?" I didn't tell Ron the answers were candy and romance.

But Bob insisted so strenuously, we came. For many years, his office had been on the first floor at 395 Concord Ave. When I arrived, he had moved to the second floor, for greater security, and the first floor office he had vacated was divided into two smaller offices. I was in one; Jack McManus had the other. For a long time, I wondered why Bob had been so adamant that we come. What was I supposed to do there? I learned quickly that his management style was very laid-back; you were expected to discover for yourself what you were there to do. Yet, I couldn't. Remember that I still wasn't even on the staff, even when I later became "National Chairman." Eventually, of course, I did figure it out. *Bob had brought me to Belmont to be his confidant.*

Often it happened, that, at the end of the day, Bob and I were alone in the building, he working upstairs in his office, I downstairs in mine. By six or seven o'clock, really important people like McManus had gone home. So it was, that a couple or three times a week, I would clearly hear Bob's slippers in the stillness--he always wore slippers in the office--padding toward my office door, where he would invite me to dinner. Upstairs, in his office, he would call Marian Welch, who officed about a mile away, at 4 Hill Road, next to Scott Stanley.

"Mrs. Welch, I have in my office a young man by whom I have been often stanged."

That was my cue to call my own wife, Gail, who would be sitting at the phone. If Mrs. Welch took more time to get ready than Bob thought she should, he would refer to her as "the late Mrs. Welch." Soon, the four of us would be sitting in a booth at Fantasia's, one of the Welches' favorite restaurants, just over the city line in Cambridge, or, less often, in downtown Boston, at Jake Werth's, where the specialty was pig's knuckles.

Dinner with the Welches was truly unforgettable. For instance, as soon as the waiter put our plates on the table, Bob would ceremoniously pick up his parsley and disdainfully throw it on mine. Everyone knows he founded JBS. Not many people know that Robert Welch was also the founder of an organization called the SPPPPPPPP, the Society to Prevent People From Putting Parsley on People's Plates in Public Places. He claimed it was a mass movement so influential it even had a subcommittee on watercress; if so, it was very unobtrusive, because I never met another member. Bob parsleyed me so often, that no one at Fantasia's paid the slightest attention. He never saw the glaring

contradiction in the fact that he himself was throwing parsley on people's plates. Polite to a fault, I didn't point it out.

Bob would tell people in the restaurant that my wife was his granddaughter, which reminds me that former FBI undercover agent Julia Brown--who also did speaking tours for the Society--used to tell people that she was my grandmother, which raised a few eyebrows, because Julia was black. What did we talk about during dinner? For instance, an argument would erupt between the Welches about the true meaning of a Latin phrase. Mrs. Welch, a graduate of Wellesley, was just as smart as Robert Welch, and a lot prettier. Again, this continued a couple or three times a week for years. I don't know of anyone, outside family, who had such a historic opportunity. Much of the time, I would drive us to the restaurant in Bob's car, invariably a big Dodge. It happened that, many times, he would spend the night working at his desk, catnapping on his couch; so, on the way back from the restaurant, I would ask, "Bob, do you want to go to your house, or to Mrs. Welch's house?" Mrs. Welch invariably would be delighted. Bob Welch would shake his cane in mock anger, and say, "One of these days, Alan."

A memorable confrontation occurred at one of these dinners. We were discussing horses. Either Mrs. Welch or I mentioned that Jay Agnew, a very patrician gentleman who was a member of the National Council of the Society, was a breeder of Thoroughbreds. Bob Welch insisted there was no such thing as a Thoroughbred. Any breeder who called his breed "Thoroughbred" would be taking unethical advantage in business. In fact, said he, warming to the thought, if what we had said was true, if Jay Agnew really was calling his horses "Thoroughbreds," then he, Bob Welch, would have him kicked off the Council in the morning, no matter how nice a man he was. Mrs. Welch demurred. Bob asked me for the answer. "Alan, am I right or wrong?" Of course, I told him he was wrong. Angered, he said that he would pay \$100 to Mrs. Welch's favorite charity if investigation proved her right.

The next day, I received a copy of a letter from him to her, stating that he was enclosing a \$100 check. You will find this incident discussed at length in an article I did in 1983 for *American Opinion* about Robert Welch, for the Twenty Fifth Anniversary celebration of the Society in Indianapolis, where I was master of ceremonies. Bob must have loved my exposé, in which I called him a "fanatic for the truth." He handed out armfuls of the issue in the hotel, telling people to "see what Stang says about me now!"

But there was more to our association than just going out to dinner. Because we spent so much time together alone, Bob often confided in me his thoughts about the different people and personalities in Society leadership; about Society policies, purposes and programs; about some aspect of the Conspiracy. Often, he asked for my opinion of these things. We became close friends. I don't think I exaggerate when I say I know what he thought.

Even before we moved to Belmont, I formed an organization called Hippiess For Welch. Needless to say, I was National Commander. Our stationery looked just like the Society's, and set forth a cast of characters every bit as distinguished as the Council. Susan L.M. Huck, Ph.D., another writer for Society publications, was Minister of Propaganda. My dear friend, the late R.D. Patrick "Mad Dog" Mahoney, the immortal sergeant, of Special Forces, was Minister of Justice. Many summer campers went home with Hippiess For Welch [membership cards](#) and [stationery](#). Once, a Society leader in Colorado crashed his private plane in the Rockies--if memory serves, he was a dentist--and members came from around the area to find it. I am told that they identified themselves to each other with those cards.

At one youth camp in Pennsylvania where I spent a week, a couple of speakers--I can't recall who they were--drove into town, Hancock, New York. Both of them were wearing Mickey Mouse hats, complete with ears, so, of course, when they entered the local supermarket to buy toiletries, they were singing Mickey's song. When they left, everyone in the supermarket joined in. We never did find out where they got the hats.

Of course there were many other anecdotes; many other stories I could tell, enough to fill a book. I am going to stop here. The whole point of what you have read so far--for people who didn't know who I was--is to establish the fact that I am not just an onlooker, not just an armchair strategist. I was in almost at the beginning. For many years, the Society was my life. Many times, I stood alone on the floor of college and high school gyms, while hundreds of world government zombies screamed for my head. At the time, we called it "fun." [Here is a student flyer](#) announcing one of my appearances. [Here is a picture of me](#) Birching in Durango, Colorado, on November 11, 1967. I never did get the name of the horse. [Here is the "Giant Stang Cake,"](#) presented to me by some Society members at a banquet. The late Congressman Bill Steiger labelled me "The Giant Stang" in the *Congressional Record*, because my *American Opinion* article and speeches had thrown a large monkey wrench into the fascist, federal monstrosity called OSHA, which he co-authored. [Here's another picture](#) of me Birching at a summer youth camp. The astounding Christian beauty beside me is Miss Katie Hanrahan, a sumptuous morsel of feminine loveliness. Yes, all the girls at the summer camps were this gorgeous. [Here we are](#) in the Belmont office of beautiful editor Marian Welch. The man on the left is Hollywood actor and *bon vivant* Ronn Wright, a Birch speaker. The man in the middle is *raconteur extraordinaire* Charles Smith, another Birch speaker. I am the man wearing the tie. I'm holding the medieval mace to make sure that editor Welch meets her many deadlines, because, if she doesn't, Bob Welch will call her "the late Mrs. Welch."

[Here is the last page](#) of a letter to a member Bob Welch wrote on February 27, 1970, a copy of which he sent to me. The member had written to complain vigorously because, in one of my articles, I had said that Cecil Rhodes was an important member of the master Conspiracy, and the member apparently admired Rhodes. Yes, my ears are burning, even my face, as I make this letter public. It has rested in my files for almost 30 years; I have never showed it to anyone--except my wife--but now is the time.

We finally left the Boston area for two reasons: my wife discovered quickly that the area was overrun with Yankees, and the nearest church she attended was hundreds of miles away. I knew we had to leave when she explained that, if she could not attend the church of her choice, she would "slither down into the basement and become a seething hulk of deadness." I did not want to be married to a seething hulk of deadness. I wanted to be married to the incredibly gorgeous creation I had met in the John Birch Summer Camp in Arkansas. (Years later, we would learn that many strange things happen in Arkansas. When my friend Harold B. Key, Tennessee Coordinator for many years, wanted to communicate that a man was really famous, he would say, "Why this man is known throughout the United States, and parts of Arkansas!")

In fact, my wife read in a church paper about a woman in a Maine town. The paper thought this woman maybe was a church member; maybe not. There was no church in the town, just this woman, who maybe was a member. My wife loaded up the kiddoes and drove there--quite a haul from Nashua, New Hampshire, where she had insisted we move to escape Taxachusetts. She never did find the woman suspected of church membership, and the police in that town no doubt are still talking about the day the crazy woman no one had ever seen rousted them from a hand of pinochle and turned the town upside down,

looking for her. That evening, when I heard the story, I knew we had to move. Of course, my close friendship with Bob Welch continued.

The Problem Before Us

Remember that the point of all this is not to prove what a great guy I am, and not just to establish how close Bob Welch and I were. Yes, we were very close, so I know how he thought. But there is an even more important reason for reminding you who I am. When you ask the people who presently run the John Birch Society about what you will read in a minute, there is an outside chance that, instead of answering your questions, they will tell you I was always "unreliable," and/or "incompetent," a man who did do some things for the Society, but certainly was "nowhere near as important as he thinks he was," and certainly "didn't know the mind of Robert Welch," et cetera and so on. Why would I expect them to say that?

In recent years, we have seen many people leave the staff of the John Birch Society. Almost invariably, we learn from Appleton thereafter that the man who left had gone wrong. "We knew this all along, of course. We were just waiting for the right time to fire him. He was a sorehead. He wouldn't take direction. He wouldn't cooperate. He wanted to run the organization." This or something like it would be said about almost every man who left. And, after a while, I began to scratch my head. I scratched so much, I lost some hair.

Because there are soreheads in every organization, I was willing to believe that--how many? Two? Three? Four?--some of the men who left the Society were what management said they were. The problem was that I knew many of the men who had left. Later, I met a couple or three I hadn't known. And I knew that, without exception, they were not at all what the Society was saying. They weren't soreheads. They did cooperate. They did take direction. What was happening? Was it statistically possible that so many men could "go wrong?" I looked into that question and found that something was wrong, all right, but it wasn't the men. The John Birch Society was collapsing. We can kid ourselves all we like. The Society today consists of little more than a magazine. Except for that magazine, its influence is zero. In its present condition, it is one of the best things that has happened to the Conspiracy in years.

From time to time, people would ask what I thought. I would tell them and answer their questions, but I initiated nothing, with one exception, a letter to the Council I was inveigled into signing by misrepresentation. I did nothing, confident that a collapsing Society was better than nothing.

With the continuing debacle of the last couple of years, however--the departure in droves of the Society's best men, the impending disappearance of the bookstores and now Appleton's new policy on voluntary prayer (the beam that brought down the camel)--I have come to believe that there is no down side to what I propose to do here, because, *if nothing is done, the Society will either collapse totally, or degenerate into precisely the letterhead organization that sells books, which Bob Welch so disdained, the only remaining purpose of which will be to provide lucrative paychecks and pensions for the people who run it.*

The rationale of this little presentation is my belief that many members of the Society don't know what you are going to read here. What I propose to do is give you a brief history of the problem, including specific examples. There are many documents: letters, memos, etc. Wherever I discuss something and there is a document to support it, there will be a link. Simply click on the link, read the document and make up your own mind. Bear in mind that we are able to

show you here only some of the documents we have. To show you everything, we would need to take over the internet.

I am not concerned about cosmetics. This is not an issue of *American Opinion* and time is short. I shall make no suggestions. I believe that, if you are intelligent enough to be reading this, you will know what to do. I should also point out that no organization is behind this effort. No one is paying me to do it. In fact, I completed it before anyone else knew it existed. I'm doing it because, for me for many years, the Society was my life.

The trouble started with the probable kidnapping in 1983 by the Soviets of Congressman Larry McDonald, Bob Welch's successor as head of the Society. Dr. McDonald was a dream leader, who offered all the talents the Society's chairman would need. Like everyone I've ever heard of--you, I, Bob Welch, and the notorious adulterer and murderer King David--Larry had his faults. As far as I know, of the millions of people who have ever walked the earth, the only one who was perfect was Jesus Christ, too small a percentage to measure. Of course, Jesus had the advantage of being God. On the other hand, had God told us to write down what we wanted in a Chairman, and promised to give us what we wanted, the man He would have given us was Larry.

Dr. McDonald was movie-star handsome. He was tall; he was patrician. Had he flown into Burbank and been agreeable, an agent would have signed him to a lucrative, celluloid contract before he left the terminal. He was a Member of Congress and knew our government from the inside. He was a consummate organizer and administrator. He was tireless. Probably most important, he knew the Conspiracy wall to wall. Thank God when he was removed, we still had Robert Welch. Bob--who had been born in 1899--told me not to worry, that his plan was to live into the year 2001, so he could tell people he had lived in three centuries. Indeed, a critic had already dubbed him one of the finest minds of the *Eighteenth* Century. Whoever that critic was, he probably would have been disappointed to learn that Bob loved the criticism; but in less than six months Bob was incapacitated by a massive stroke. He should have died. Instead, he lived on for many months, during which he could no longer recognize his wife of 62 years, and probably didn't recognize himself.

How does a national organization choose a successor? First, it chooses a Search Committee, from members of its own board, or from distinguished citizens known to them. The Search Committee lets it be known that it is receiving recommendations, and builds a list of possible nominees. The Search Committee designates a subcommittee to sift through people on the list. Eventually, an "A" list of finalists is made. The contenders are summoned to be examined. What are their qualifications to run this particular organization? And so on. Eventually, the right person is chosen. The process often takes months. What questions should a Search Committee searching for a successor to Robert Welch have asked?

Can the candidate write a magazine article?

Can the candidate write a book?

Can the candidate make a speech?

Can the candidate inspire the men in the field?

Can the candidate inspire the sacrifice required to win?

Has the candidate already proven himself in some art or profession or enterprise?

Does the candidate offer the required encyclopedic knowledge of the Conspiracy and world history?

Can the candidate take questions from the New York press and survive?

Can the candidate bring different groups together?

For instance, with regard to point three above--Can the candidate make a speech?--consider the testimony of a lady who has been a member of the Society for many years. She speaks of a recent business luncheon with many in attendance. The Coordinator had brought many prospects. A physician had brought a businessman friend he had finally persuaded to sit down and listen. People were excited. The purpose of the meeting was to view a recruiting video starring Mr. CEO. The lady reports that it was long, dull, poorly done and repetitious. It presented generalities rather than facts. "It was boring. It was so bad, it was embarrassing. Everything he said, he could have said in four minutes. Everyone agreed, even including the guests, and everyone was vocal about it. I was incensed. How anyone with any intelligence could let something like it out, I can't imagine."

Of course, Larry McDonald could do all these things and then some; Bob Welch could do them, and these are some of the questions he would have asked, had he lived until 2001, according to plan. They should be asked of anyone who presumes to run the Society. Now, you have to ask them. Instead, how were Bob's successors selected? The sad fact is that, by and large, their main qualification was the fact that no one else would take the job. The man who runs the John Birch Society today was chosen for the simple reason that there was no one else.

On the other hand, the way he got in means nothing, and the answers to the above questions are unimportant--even if the answer to every one of them is "No"--if the present management of JBS is going nose-to-nose with the enemy, is winning battles, is at least fighting battles; is building and inspiring the membership, is selling more books; is expanding and inventing programs; is *hurting the Conspiracy*; all the things the Society was founded to do, which are dangerous when effective. So, let's look at what the present management is doing.

Prayer at Camp

And let's begin with the latest extrusion. Prayer was certainly an important element of the summer camps I first attended almost thirty years ago. Wherever in the country the Society ran a camp, from Pennsylvania to California, students would gather voluntarily during free time in the afternoon, or after the campfire, to say the Rosary, or to read Scripture, or to do whatever else their respective church, or synagogue, or other religious organization, called worship. Adults at the camp--Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, etc.--participated. Again, this was not required; it was certainly not sectarian. Participation in one's own religion was one of the things the camps tried to encourage.

No more. Pursuant to an Executive Order issued by Mr. CEO, such voluntary prayer at JBS summer camps no longer is permitted. It would be easy to speculate about his reasons. I am not going to do that. Whatever his reasons, that is the fact. At about the same time, in Boston, the federal government forbade all religious activity at a church summer camp, because seven of the

camp's teenage counselors were participants in a federally funded summer-jobs program. The church camp had won praise from everyone in the area, but the government is now trying to shut it down.

What hath Smith's decision wrought? For many years, the Society has run a summer camp in Indiana. If memory serves, your intrepid correspondent has spoken there and can testify that the summer humidity is such that, without prayer, survival is unlikely. Our first witness is Noelle Dielman. Noelle ran the camp newspaper. Her mother, Marilyn Norton, ran the newspaper before her. Noelle has been attending Birch summer camps, as camper, and now as mother, for twenty five years. [Here is her letter](#). Noelle also reports that a camper she had brought from Louisville, where she lives, was harassed mercilessly by other boys in his cabin--because he is black--but that the camp management not only did nothing about it; they kicked him out. That's right, the victim was punished. Noelle had to drive him home during the camp, a round trip of 600 miles! It is probably a safe guess that this young, black boy and his parents will not become members. I remember the days when we would kill for the chance to recruit a black member. Apparently, that is no longer the case.

Our next witness is Tom Foltz. Tom has been a member of the Society since 1964. [His letter](#) needs no help from me. Don Julius for about twenty years was a Coordinator in Ohio. We'll hear more from Don later. He complained about the prohibition of voluntary prayer at the camp and was fired. [Here is the letter he wrote on the subject](#). As you can see, he fully backs Tom Foltz up.

And our final witness in the matter is [Dr. Charles Rice](#). Dr. Rice is Professor of Law at Notre Dame Law School, and has written for the magazine. For many years, he spoke at the Indiana camp. No more. As you saw in the Foltz letter, Society management apparently backdated documents and crawfished temporarily when they got wind that Dr. Rice had quit. How many such celebrities can the Society afford to lose? The Society in that part of the country has been decimated.

It is important to see this disaster in context. If it stood alone, reason would tell us it was a mistake, a misunderstanding. But it does not stand alone. It is merely the latest in a long train of abuses. A pattern emerges.

The Front Line

Now, let's look at a small group of extraordinary men. I'm talking about the field staff of the John Birch Society. Because of my endless travels, to cover stories, to attend council dinners, but especially on speaking tours, I spent time with many of them for more than twenty years. Often, we would spend days together alone, barnstorming across their territories. If ever the phrase "unwept, unhonored and unsung" applied to anyone, it does to them. Part salesman, part confidant, part organizer, part inspiration, and more, the Coordinator is the Society's company commander on the front line. Everywhere, I found these men almost universally to be Christian knights of the highest ideals, men who often left lucrative, satisfying careers to enlist, who enjoy low pay and little recognition; men who suffer fools and abuse gladly to get the job done, whose wives are often equally heroic. I know I could never have done their job. They have no retirement plan, and little advancement. What many of these heroes have suffered, not at the hands of the world government enemy, *but at the hands of Society management*, is beyond outrage.

As you know, the US Marine Corps never leaves wounded comrades behind. To do so, would be unspeakable dishonor. The Corps never even leaves its dead. Even the Communists carry away their wounded. They certainly did in Vietnam. The world government conspirators take care of their own, because

they know perfectly well that if they did not, they would quickly lose the loyalty of their cadre. Some years back, Dean Rusk told the media he had fallen on hard times. Soon, we heard, he had been appointed dean of a law school down south. Again, even the Satanists take care of their own. So, how fare the heroes who labor in the field for the Society?

For many years, Society policy has been so suicidal, so cruel, so alien to common sense, that I could not believe what I was seeing. When a warrior is wounded in the field--a man who has gone nose-to-nose with the enemy in the ditch and therefore may be spackled with gore--the Society not only doesn't help him; official Society policy is to blame him for being hit, and to leave him where he lies. While the members in his territory listen to his dying groans, the men at the top, who make the big money, tell us that the proof of the victim's moral delinquency is the fact that he was hit.

I do not pretend to understand this. Is the reason that respectability is more important to Society management than anything else, more important than God, family, country and Society? Is the reason plain cowardice? Is something more sinister behind it? Again, I don't know. Every time I see it, I figuratively take off my hat, because, despite this bizarre policy, calculated to destroy loyalty, the victims, almost to a man, continue to stand by the Society, while they close around the latest victim and try to carry him from the field. Let these few lines of tribute be the accolade they deserve until a statue can be erected in their honor beside the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. Here is the testimony of a few of them. ([Sechrist letter](#)) ([Cahoon letter](#)) I recall a Coordinator who had worked for the Society for some years and now was moving on; a competent man of immense, genuine charm. He told me in wonderment about the letter he had received from headquarters in answer to his request for a letter of reference. The letter simply stated that, yes, this man worked for the John Birch Society, from x date, to x date.

Brian Cavallo was a Coordinator in Arizona. [In this first letter](#), he comments about a script that headquarters (Mr. CEO?) had prepared for Rich Dilworth to use in a teleconference, to explain to Arizona Coordinators the removal from the Council of Chuck Carlson. Now, [here is the script](#). Finally, here are two more letters from Brian Cavallo, one to [Bill Jasper](#), the other his resignation to [Rich Dilworth](#). I did not know Brian Cavallo. I knew Don Kennedy very well, for many years. [Here is his letter](#) to Chuck Carlson.

Kevin Bearly was a Coordinator in Southern California for many years. Will Grigg is the writer for *The New American*. Tom Parsley is one of the four Major Coordinators who have been fired or resigned in recent years. The others are Mark Horton, Dave Morris and Steve Thomas. (There may be more. These are the ones I know about.)

Some of what happened is fairly tricky. In the Southwest, Mark was kicked out for refusing to kick out Coordinator Bearly, the son of a Coordinator. Mark was replaced by Tom Parsley, who also was kicked out for refusing to kick out Kevin, who was later kicked out. [Here is a memo](#) from Kevin to Tom. On May 3, 1997, seven men met at Kevin's home, to discuss the future of the Society. Here is former [Coordinator Jeff Fraser's letter](#) to Tom Parsley about that meeting and its consequences.

We have already met Don Julius, a Coordinator for almost twenty years. [Here is his record](#) on the staff. I have spent some time with Don Julius--unfortunately not enough--when he carted your intrepid correspondent around his territory on speaking tours. I was with him long enough to know him as a man of honor. He was a favorite of R.D. Patrick Mahoney, who worked for the Society for many years. On August 2, 1999, Don wrote a letter to the Council, the Board of

Incorporators and staff. He was fired. [Here is the letter](#). Read it and weep. [Here is the list of reinstatements](#) Don mentions.

Another man whose name we cannot mention was also on the staff for many years, so long that I have spent time with him too. [Here is a letter](#) from the man I mentioned. It speaks for itself. [Here is a letter on the same subject from William G. Schneider](#), of Indianapolis. Rich Weathers worked for the Society for many years, as Coordinator, Major Coordinator and fund raiser. He and I--and the audience that had come to hear my remarks--once had to evacuate a hall in northern Kentucky because of a bomb threat. Such fun! These days, Rich raises buckets of money for A.N.N., and arranges employment there for Coordinators who have quit or been fired. Is that why he apparently has become Mr. CEO's favorite *bete noire* of late? Let's let Rich Weathers speak for himself. [Here is a memo](#).

Finally, here are a [couple of charts](#) that show what has happened to the field staff. Again, you will need to scratch Don Julius. Please also scratch Jeff French. He too was fired recently. Looking at these charts, I ask myself whether it is now Society policy to eliminate the field staff. I don't know the answer, but I do have a question. Without a field staff, the Society could be run like a business--it already has a CEO--and there would be much more money for home office raises and pensions. Is that what is happening?

After the May 3, 1997, meeting, Will Grigg apparently was called on the carpet for attending. Mr. CEO demanded an explanation. [Here it is](#).

Jackie Puuri works, or worked, at headquarters in Appleton. I don't know the lady. [Here is what it's like to work](#) at the last bastion of the free world. Notice that this lady has been working for God knows how long without heat. *In Wisconsin? In winter?* Friends, have you ever been in Wisconsin in winter? Your intrepid correspondent has, and can testify that it can get cold enough to daunt an Eskimo. Notice also that the lady is working with equipment that doesn't work.

Here are a couple of statements from David Martin. I have probably known David for twenty five years. He is a man of total loyalty to the Society, and has done just about everything in shipping, warehousing, book promotion, etc. [Read his revelations](#) about the reign of terror in Appleton and weep. That's what my wife did. She broke down at the monitor. Excuse me, did we understand correctly? Did they really shut David down because he was selling too many books?

While all this was happening, while Jackie Puuri was working with equipment that doesn't work, forced to use illegal heat and sitting in a rotten chair; Mr. CEO's salary was about \$95,000. Remember, I'm using the word "about." Do not be put off if you hear that Stang is sopping wet because Mr. CEO's pay is really \$96,212. Also, I'm not complaining about the amount. A man who runs the Society is worth a lot more than that. I'm just wondering why Mr. CEO was being paid about \$95,000, while the workers were freezing. Is this perverted policy designed to prove the Communists are right?

At last word, David still has not been fired, no doubt because management can't find someone loyal enough, and efficient enough to do the wonderful job David Martin does for the menial wages he is willing to accept. Like the Coordinators, he deserves an apology from the moguls on high and his own accolade. It is up to you to see that he gets them. For now, David, please know that I for one recognize your noble spirit.

The Members Speak

Robert Welch used to call the members of the John Birch Society the "finest body of men and women in the world." He was right. Always, everywhere, in the more than twenty years of travel I did for the Society, I found the members--black, white, or something else; Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Mormon, or something else--to be the finest people in their community; the most moral, the most patriotic, the most intelligent, the most fun. The members are the Society. They are what outsiders see. They do the work, donate the money, implement the plans and take the risks.

What do the members say? Here are some examples. I have arranged them in chronological order. As far as I know, I have never met any of the authors of these letters. ([Christen letter](#), August 5, 1996) ([Burns letter](#), May 17, 1997) ([Sutherlin letter](#), May 29, 1997) ([Winther letter](#), June 5, 1997) ([Pernetti letter](#), September 5, 1997) ([Kiel letter](#), December 10, 1997)

Also in this department, the situation in southern California, long a Birch stronghold, became so tense that some members put together a petition demanding that Mr. CEO be removed. [Here it is](#).

You already have heard about Chuck Carlson, a member of the Council who was kicked out for asking too many questions. Here are the questions he asked, in a [memo](#) and a [letter](#).

It is perfectly true that since the foundation of the Society, more than forty years ago, people who believed they could run it better than Bob Welch kept appearing. After he rode into Valhalla, more of them came forth, more often. This was not surprising, in view of the fact that, again, the succession had been devastated by the possible kidnapping of Larry McDonald and Bob's stroke. As you have seen, the problem now is not just one or two people every few years who want to run the Society; now, we are talking about nationwide eruptions, involving people who don't want to run the Society, but who are merely fed up. It is important to note that most of them don't know each other, so they can't be putting ideas into each other's heads.

And I ask myself the same reasonable question we asked about Clinton. Remember? Could all of these women be lying? Could all of them be soreheads? Could everyone who has exposed some small piece of the plot be part of the "vast right wing conspiracy?"

So, all I have done--and now ask you to do--is to apply these simple rules of common sense to the present disaster in The John Birch Society. Are all these people--many of whom have given most of their lives and much of their money to the Society--soreheads who merely want to take over? Have they all gone crazy? How many more members and leaders must go crazy, before you take action? Remember that most of them "went crazy" after Society management praised them for their work and self-sacrifice, after years of employment or volunteer leadership. In my opinion, this defies logic. Isn't the Society the thing they all had in common? If they are crazy, did the Society drive them there?

A Little History

The Society was founded in December, 1958. Within a couple of years, Der New World Order recognized that JBS was the main obstacle in its way. If memory serves, the attacks began in February, 1961, in *People's World*, official West Coast organ of the Communist Party. The same attack appeared a couple of months later, in the multi-million subscriber weekly news magazines, almost in

the same words, but as if the editors of *Time* and *Newsweek* had thought of it themselves. Later, I learned that they never think of anything themselves.

I recall being at a cocktail party in Greenwich Village at the time. Suddenly, a feminoid was screaming in my face. "You're talking like a Bircher!" At the time, I was so naive I didn't know that there are people who appear to be female, who wear female clothing, female jewelry and makeup--and who even may be anatomically female--but who, despite all these indicia, are not females at all. Unless some other scribbler lays claim to the word, I think it was I who later coined the term "feminoid" to explain such oddities of gender.

I wish I could recall what I had said to provoke the outburst. Unfortunately, the pearls I was casting are lost to history, and I never did learn the name of the swine. Thank God she left immediately for the canapé table to fill her face.

At the time, my knowledge of the Conspiracy consisted of an intense hostility toward Stalin and his successors, and my belief--go ahead and laugh--that Eisenhower fervently opposed them. Because, like most Americans, I did not read *People's World* at the time, and certainly didn't read the weekly slimewrappers, I had no idea what a Bircher was, except that it obviously had something to do with logging, or aboretums, maybe even the construction industry.

Because of things like this, multiplied a thousandfold across the country, Bob Welch admonished the members: *Never believe anything about the John Birch Society unless it comes directly from Society headquarters.* That admonition probably saved the Society. One had only to pick up the phone to learn the truth about what someone was supposed to have said or done or belonged to.

But the admonition did not consider one terrible possibility. It didn't need to while Bob was in charge. What recourse would there be were headquarters itself to fall like overripe fruit into the hands of individuals who, for whatever reason, were inimical to the noble purpose Bob had ordained? Please consider the question without inserting personalities. Wouldn't that possibility turn his admonition on its head; change it from a safeguard to a threat? Indeed, wouldn't the admonition now be much worse than nothing at all--because now it would be impossible to solve a problem, or even to get information? It would turn the Society's strength against itself. Remember, we're still speaking hypothetically, about no one in particular.

Our next witness is Ron Bennett. [Here is a letter](#) Ron received in 1998, from Wayne Rickert, a member of the Council of the Society. I don't recall ever meeting Mr. Rickert. Ron Bennett tells your obedient servant it's the "most insulting" letter he has ever received. Notice the last sentence of the second paragraph, which says that Vance Smith "is unquestionably the best C.E.O. the Society has ever had."

So, according to Wayne Rickert, *Smith is an even better C.E.O. than Robert Welch himself, the founder of the Society!* Wayne Rickert says there is no question about this. Do you believe it? Pardon me, Mr. Rickert, I don't. In my opinion, your preposterous assertion is symptomatic of the Society's present collapse.

Who is Ron Bennett, the man who, according to Wayne Rickert is spewing "nonsense?" Ron Bennett is a member of the Council. (He may be another *formermember* when you read this.) Indeed, Ron Bennett just happens to be the man who saved the Society in 1986, when it was teetering on the edge of bankruptcy and could not pay its bills. At that desperate moment, Ron Bennett came forward with \$100,000. Yes, \$100,000! Were it not for Ron

Bennett, the Society would no longer exist. [Here is a letter Bob Welch sent Ron Bennett in 1982.](#)

Our final witness is Joseph C. Maurer. Who is Joe Maurer? What are his qualifications?. He was chairman of the executive committee of the John Birch Society, presumably as close to the horse's mouth as you can get. With your permission, I am going to assume that Joe knows a lot about JBS, and is precisely the authoritative voice from headquarters Bob Welch promised we could trust. Many people mistakenly believe that the chairman of the executive committee is the CEO's boss. In fact, Joe Maurer has an even more impressive qualification. A couple of years back, in perfect, good faith, Joe was vigorously *defending* Vance Smith from the approaching tsunami of complaint. [Here is an example.](#)

Later, Joe learned that the complaints about JBS management were true. "You can't believe anything they say," he told me; about membership, about magazine circulation, etc. They have a "constantly abrasive attitude." Joe learned that he had been appointed to "deflect criticism" of the leadership. In other words, they had appointed Joe Maurer to serve as unwitting front man. [Mrs. Janet Nash's reply](#) certainly got his attention.

Many members still have a favorable impression of Jack McManus. [Here is a letter](#) Mrs. Nash wrote him about that same meeting in her home. She also wrote to Council member [Cliff Goehring](#) and to Council member [Wayne Rickert](#).

By now, Joe Maurer knew he'd been had. Unwilling to continue serving as a patsy, and thoroughly disgusted with the mindless, juvenile harassment that has regrettably become a Society trademark, he quit. [Here is the story in a couple of his letters.](#) The Phil Binzel he mentions is another long-time member of the Council. Joe warns that, while the Mormons constitute less than 2% of the nation's population, they are a much higher percentage of the Society's leadership. The "Mormon issue" he and Mrs. Nash mention needs to be explained. [Here is a letter that will help.](#) Will Grigg is a Mormon.

Allow me to say my own word about religion. Because JBS is not a church group, I don't care if all its leaders are Mormons, or Catholics, or Jews, or something else, if--if--if those leaders are working tirelessly to implement the Society's purpose. What is that purpose? One of its jewels is certainly the protection--and the triumphant victory--of our Christian civilization. This is a Christian nation. Even the Supreme Court has ruled to that effect. (This includes Judaism. All the apostles were Jews. Jesus Himself, also known as I AM, is a rabbi. Christianity began as a Jewish sect.) Proof of the validity of this Society purpose is the fact that the Conspirators hate Christianity more than anything else. That is why more Christians have been killed in the Twentieth Century than at any other time, including ancient Rome. Christianity makes the mad dogs of world government foam at the mouth. Clinton told novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez at a dinner on Martha's Vineyard, in 1995, "My only enemy is right-wing fundamentalist Christianity." So, what is Society leadership doing?

The answer is that, *whatever their motive*, they are doing exactly what the Conspiracy wants. I said above that the Society is not a church group. That means it is not and cannot become the tool of any particular church or denomination, in the same sense that the U.S. government must be separated from church via the famous wall mentioned not in the Constitution but in a letter from Thomas Jefferson to some Baptists in Connecticut.

But, the Society *is a religious* group, just as the U.S. government is and must be religious, because Christianity is the basis of the civilization we are trying to defend. Like the U.S. government, the Society must be intensely religious, but just as intensely non-sectarian. The conspirators apparently know that better than we do.

Suppose you wanted to destroy the Society's effectiveness. What would you do? Obviously, you couldn't merely announce your goal. You would need some subterfuge. Whatever it was wouldn't matter, as long as you came out in the same place. You could do that by saying the Society must stand for no religion, for fear of offending Jews and Muslims. You could forbid voluntary prayer at JBS summer camps--using the same excuse the federal government used when it recently banned prayer at a church summer camp. You could attack the Roman Catholic Church. Please note that this analysis isn't proof. I am carefully labeling it speculation. It's a question, not an answer. But, I would submit, it is a reasonable speculation; a reasonable question. If there is some other reason for the Society's present systematic compulsion to alienate its members, friends, staff and supporters, that reason has yet to emerge.

Let's Add It Up

If the people presently running the John Birch Society are telling the truth, all the people mentioned above--and many more we don't have room to mention--are lying. We're talking about one man and a couple of henchmen at the top, versus more and more "dissidents" every day. If Appleton is telling the truth, Steve Thomas is lying. Steve was Larry McDonald's campaign manager. For years, he ran the Georgia camp and was Major Coordinator. Tom Parsley was an official for the Boy Scouts, one of the Society's farm teams. When he was ready for the major leagues, he became a Major Coordinator and stayed for almost twenty five years. If Appleton is telling the truth, Tom Parsley is lying. Which reminds me that I once asked Bob Welch, "Doesn't the fact that you have a man named Tom Parsley in your employ, in such a prominent position no less, prove incontrovertibly that the SPPPPPPPP is not only a tissue of fabrication, but that it is the mere letterhead organization--without even a letterhead--that many of us have long suspected it is?"

"*Au contraire*, my friend," he responded. Despite the fact that Tom's bizarre surname certainly was an affront to all things culinary--and therefore to polite civilization itself--Bob explained that he had elected to sacrifice his righteous aversion to parsley on the altar of the larger mission because Mr. P. was doing such a good job.

Dr. Dave Morris is a chiropractor. He didn't need to work for the Society. But he too was a Major Coordinator, on the staff for twenty years. Is he lying? Still another Major Coordinator was Mark Horton. I didn't know him or Coordinator Kevin Bearly until recently because they are so young; they are both most impressive men, who have the ability to inspire. Are they lying? If all these men are as bad as we are now told they are, how did they get hired in the first place? How were they able to stay there so long? If all these men are as bad as Mr. CEO now says they are, then the Society's ability to pick leaders is zilch.

Is Council member Chuck Carlson lying? Is Council member Russ Owen, who is also gone, lying? Is executive committee chairman Joe Maurer lying? J.R. Smeed was another member of the Council. J.R. owns the building where the Society headquartered in San Marino, California. That's why it was there. In fact, he bought the building so the Society could have a place to go. Like Ron Bennett, J.R. saved the Society, once when he guaranteed a loan to a bank; again when he sent the money to cover checks. Is he lying too? Is longtime

Major Coordinator Don Kennedy lying? Are Coordinators George Sechrest and Jeff Fraser and Jim Cahoon lying? Is Coordinator Don Julius, recently fired in Ohio, lying? Is Coordinator Jeff French, also recently fired, lying? And now come the people who ran the Indiana camp. Are they lying? Is Dr. Charles Rice, Professor of Law at Notre Dame, lying? And remember, all these people are just a few examples.

These are the questions you must ask yourself. *Can everyone be crazy?*

I can recall when American Opinion Bookstores covered the landscape like buffalo before the coming of the railroad. Not only did they sell books, they were meeting places for local members. Today, Pat Dixon, who runs the bookstore in North Hollywood, tells me that only a few stores remain. Appleton has actually been competing with the bookstores--no doubt a reason for their decline--and has even taken steps to prevent Pat and the Orange County store from getting Society books, even through third parties. [Here is a letter from Mrs. Dixon](#) explaining how she was kicked out.

[According to internal documents](#), the Society claimed 14,839 "dues-paying" members for 1997. But that figure includes thousands of life members in home chapter. Some of them were given their memberships as gifts and have never done anything with them. Joe Maurer says he himself bought at least seven and maybe as many as ten life memberships. The people he gave them to are considered "dues-paying" members. According to Joe--remember, he's a former chairman of the executive committee--there are only a few thousand real, working members left.

Why have I published this material? Again, I'm doing it myself. No organization is behind it. No one has paid me to do it. In fact, no one except my wife even knew about it before it was completed. I publish it because I persist in my belief that the Society can be rescued from the fourth rate leadership that has brought this once proud body to its knees. You now have the facts. Let me know if there is something more you think I could do. Have you had an experience like the ones described above? Please let us know about it. Also, we need all the names and addresses you have--especially email addresses--of people you believe should know about this website. Please send them to the email address below.

feedback@hotmail.com

Along these lines, please keep checking this Site. We intend to add to it regularly, as the disaster unfolds.

I close with what to me is an electrifying statement, a statement that in a few lines tells the whole story. My witness is Tom Parsley, fired when he refused to fire Kevin Bearly, because he learned that Kevin was not at all the scoundrel Appleton had told Tom he was. Tom Parsley testifies that he has heard G. Vance Smith make the statement "more than once"--*more than once!* More than once! Whenever I hear it, my stomach contracts with disgust. It does so now, as I set it forth, perhaps because in mind's eye I can easily see Vance saying it, with the sarcastic, yet obsequious smile I well remember. Here it is:

"There's good news and bad news. The bad news is, our members are getting old and dying. The good news is, we're in their wills. Those wills are my retirement."

feedback@hotmail.com